

CHAPTER XXIV

GENERAL DE LISLE AT SUVLA

(Map 3 ; Sketches A, 29, 30)

If I knew how, or which way to order these affairs
Thus disorderly thrust into my hands
Never believe me.

Richard II, 2 ii.

It would be hard to imagine a more invidious task than that 15 Aug. which awaited General de Lisle at Suvla. Uprooted on the Map 3. 15th August at a moment's notice from his own division at Sketch Helles, he suddenly found himself in strange surroundings, in A. command of a strange corps, with its organization to pieces. His task was to pull this corps together in the course of the next few days, and to launch it against an important position which had resisted attack a week ago, and the strength of which was increasing every minute.

At the moment of his arrival General de Lisle's knowledge of the local situation was confined to what he had gathered from the staff officer who had been sent in a destroyer from G.H.Q. to take him to Suvla, and to a memorandum of instructions received from the Chief of the General Staff.

In these instructions¹ he was told that the operations in the northern zone had only been "partially successful", but that the Anzac corps had reached a favourable position for launching its final attack on the main ridge. This operation could not be set in motion for several days, and in the interval an attack must be carried out by the IX Corps at Suvla. The IX Corps, it was explained, was "very much disorganized". Eight of its eleven brigades had had heavy casualties, and the morale of three of them left much to be desired. The Turks were in strength on the W Hills and the Anafarta spur, but in the Suvla plain their line appeared to consist of nothing but snipers; and the original small garrison on Kiretch Tepe had apparently not been reinforced to any appreciable extent.

The task allotted to the IX Corps was the capture of the

¹ Appendix 16.

15 Aug. W Hills and the Anafarta spur, with the double object of preparing a further enveloping movement (*via* the Anafarta gap), and of freeing Suvla Bay from enemy shell-fire. For this operation, in addition to the eleven brigades already at Suvla, General de Lisle could count on some 5,500 dismounted men of the 2nd Mounted Division, due to arrive from Egypt before the 18th August. The Anzac corps would also co-operate on his right flank with one infantry brigade.

General Headquarters were not aware on the 15th August of the attack which General Stopford was carrying out on the Kiretch Tepe ridge that day, and the instructions to General de Lisle further suggested that on the day of his main operation "a comparatively small force would suffice to disperse the enemy snipers in the Suvla plain and to push forward along the Kiretch Tepe ridge to Ejelmer Bay". It happened, therefore, that de Lisle's first unpleasant discovery on reaching Suvla was that three of the brigades on which he had been told to count for his main attack were beating themselves to pieces that afternoon in a vain attempt to straighten out the line on the left flank.

The arguments which preceded the despatch of 5,000 dismounted Yeomanry to Gallipoli were symptomatic of the difficulties which Sir Ian Hamilton experienced throughout almost the whole period of his command in obtaining reinforcements for the Expeditionary Force.

When the 2nd Mounted Division left England for Egypt at the end of April, Lord Kitchener intended it as a reinforcement for Gallipoli, "if Sir Ian Hamilton needs it". But Sir John Maxwell, commanding in Egypt, was soon urging that he could not spare it, and there for the next three months, while the Expeditionary Force was languishing for more troops, it was retained for garrison duty. At the end of July, however, Lord Kitchener told Sir Ian Hamilton that in addition to the five divisions being sent out to him he also had a call on 20,000 troops in Egypt for use in the coming battles: of this number 8,500 Yeomanry could be used as dismounted troops.

Repeating this message to Maxwell, Sir Ian Hamilton asked him to be ready, in case of need, to send 5,000 Yeomanry to the peninsula. Maxwell again telegraphed to Lord Kitchener that not a man could be spared, but Lord Kitchener curtly replied that the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force must be given all possible help as regards fighting troops even if it involved risk to Egypt. The following day Maxwell informed Sir Ian Hamilton that the numbers he had asked for would be embarked for the Dardanelles as quickly as possible.

This message, however, did not end the matter. Two days later Lord Kitchener again changed his mind, and cabled to Sir Ian Hamilton that he could not understand why "Egyptian "garrison troops" were needed in Gallipoli, and that he had not contemplated a demand for troops from Egypt "till those sent "specially for the Dardanelles are all exhausted".

One of the main contributory causes of the British failure in Gallipoli was just this policy of withholding available reinforcements till the troops already on the peninsula "were all exhausted". In April, in May, in June, and again in July, the British attacks had petered out for want of an adequate reserve at the very moment when one extra division—sometimes even one extra brigade—might have turned the scale. At the end of July, however, Sir Ian Hamilton undoubtedly expected that the five extra divisions already allotted to him would suffice his every need. He was determined not to ask for a man more than was wanted. He was loath to increase General Maxwell's anxieties in Egypt or to add to the weight of Lord Kitchener's burden at home. In these circumstances he cabled the War Secretary that he would not ask for the Yeomanry till all his other troops were used up.

Lord Kitchener was apparently pleased with this answer, and again he half relented. "If you require them", he replied next day, "do not hesitate to use Maxwell's troops": and he repeated this injunction on the 9th August, on receiving Hamilton's news of the first landing at Suvla.

By this latter date Sir Ian Hamilton was only too well aware that he needed more men. At once he telegraphed to Maxwell for the Yeomanry to be sent as dismounted troops. This time Maxwell agreed without demur. A number of men had to be left behind in Egypt to look after the horses, but the 5th Mounted Brigade, which was also serving in Egypt, was added to the division to bring up its strength to 5,000 rifles. Each brigade was reorganized as one strong dismounted regiment, and in the shape in which it arrived on the peninsula the Mounted Division can best be compared to a brigade of five strong battalions.

Twenty-four hours' experience was sufficient to convince 16 Aug. General de Lisle that the situation at Suvla was far more serious than the Commander-in-Chief realized. In his first report to G.H.Q., written on the afternoon of the 16th, he laid special stress on the depleted strength of the IX Corps. After the arrival of 5,000 dismounted Yeomanry and the reinforcing drafts already promised, he would be able to concentrate 10,000 rifles—

16 Aug. but no more—for the capture of the W Hills and the Anafarta spur. But a personal reconnaissance had convinced him that even if he captured the whole of the Anafarta spur he would not be able to hold it unless the Tekke Tepe ridge was also held. One division might suffice to capture that ridge, but the subsequent difficulties of supply would be insurmountable. In these circumstances he proposed to concentrate on capturing the W Hills only, joining them up with the existing line at Sulajik and with the Anzac line to the south. He proposed to launch this attack on the 20th August, and, as a preliminary, to carry out a small attack to bring his right flank forward at Hetman Chair.

General de Lisle's report seems to have awakened the Commander-in-Chief for the first time not only to the great difficulties that faced the IX Corps, but to the serious situation of the whole Expeditionary Force. In the small hours of the 17 Aug. 17th August, in a cable to Lord Kitchener, he at last admitted that his "coup had so far failed". He pointed out that the total fighting strength of his army now amounted to only 95,000 rifles against a defending garrison of apparently 110,000. The Turks, moreover, were not only numerically superior: they had gained a temporary moral ascendancy over some of his new troops. They possessed all the advantages of position; they had as much ammunition as they wanted, and a continual flow of reinforcing drafts. He still had great hopes of eventual success, but only if he could be provided with drafts and fresh formations; and he placed his immediate requirements at 45,000 reinforcing drafts and new formations amounting to another 50,000. "I cannot disguise the fact", he added, "that as surprise will now be absent, and the enemy is prepared and in much greater strength, my difficulties are enormously increased." But a total reinforcement of 95,000 troops would, he hoped, give him the necessary superiority, provided that the absence of other enemies did not again allow the Turks to bring up large additional reinforcements. "I have thought it best", his message concluded, "to lay the whole truth before you quite plainly. We are up against the main Turkish army, which is fighting bravely and is well commanded."

This grave message, with its first crushing admission that the August offensive in Gallipoli had definitely failed, reached England at a moment when events in other theatres were causing deep concern. A discussion of the various considerations which now affected the Government's future policy in the Dardanelles will be reserved for a later chapter,¹ but it should be noticed

¹ See Chapter XXVI.

here that several days were to pass before Sir Ian Hamilton 17 Aug. received any reply, and several weeks before the Government found it possible to reach a definite decision.

At this critical juncture in Gallipoli, when the army was finding it impossible to make further headway without reinforcements, which probably could not be spared, an important proposal was made to the naval Commander-in-Chief, Admiral de Robeck, by Commodore Roger Keyes, the Naval Chief of Staff.

Ever since the arrival of German submarines at the latter end of May the battleships of the fleet, except when engaged in bombardments, had been confined to harbour, and their officers and men alike had longed in vain to be of more help to the hard-pressed army on the peninsula. In May¹ a keen desire had expressed itself in many parts of the fleet that the navy should again be allowed to attempt to force the Dardanelles. But Admiral de Robeck, while agreeing to forward the proposal to the Admiralty, would not recommend it, and the plan was eventually vetoed.

On the 17th August this proposal was revived. Commodore Keyes pointed out that the failure of the 18th March had been largely due to the unsuspected mine-field in Eren Keui Bay. He claimed that the situation was now far more favourable for the navy than it had been on the 18th March. The fleet now had an efficient sweeping flotilla and a greatly improved air service, and the new monitors would facilitate the shelling of the forts. The Turks were not expecting a naval attack, and many of their small mobile guns, which had previously harassed the mine-sweepers, had probably been taken away to support the field army. He urged that in the event of a new attack being allowed it did not seem too optimistic to expect that half the attacking squadron would get through the Narrows, and that a naval attack of this sort seemed to be the only solution of the present deadlock. A squadron of three or four ships, with six to eight destroyers, would be able, in co-operation with the submarines, to dominate the Marmara; the Turkish army would then be forced to retreat or to starve; the Straits would be opened, and a winter campaign avoided.

Rear-Admiral Wemyss, de Robeck's second-in-command, had been averse in May to another naval attempt to force the Straits, but now, in August, in view of the changed situation, he was prepared to support Keyes's view.² Admiral de Robeck,

¹ See Vol. I. p. 356.

² "I should find it difficult", Wemyss wrote to Keyes, "not to agree

- 17 Aug. however, still held that the task was not feasible. Nevertheless he ordered Keyes and his subordinate staff officers to submit a definite plan.

After receiving General de Lisle's report of the 16th August, Sir Ian Hamilton at once reinforced him with a brigade of the 29th Division from Helles.¹ This brigade arrived on the evening of the 17th, and two battalions were attached to the 53rd Division to help to consolidate its line. About this time, after a second personal reconnaissance of his front, General de Lisle forwarded a much more confident report to G.H.Q. He now considered that his impending attack had every chance of success: the Turkish trenches were not formidable and did not appear to be wired.

- 18 Aug. The 2nd Mounted Division (Major-General W. E. Peyton) began to land at Suvla on the 18th August, and it was then decided that, pending the arrival from England of a new divisional commander in place of General Mahon, General Peyton should take over the command of the 10th Division, and that his own 5,000 Yeomanry should be attached to it to form a third brigade. Br.-General Paul Kenna, V.C., was given command of the Yeomanry in place of General Peyton.

On this day, the 18th August, Sir Ian Hamilton visited IX Corps headquarters to discuss the next attack. A new spirit was already beginning to pervade the troops at Suvla. On the extreme right the 34th Brigade had pushed its line forward despite a good deal of opposition,² while in the left centre the 53rd Division had filled up the gap on its left, and the 54th had straightened out an awkward bend to the south of Jephson's Post. At the conference attended by the Commander-in-Chief everyone was in better heart, and all agreed that the attack on the W Hills, now fixed for the 21st August, had every chance of success.

An unavoidable drawback to the scheme of attack was that

"with your memorandum of 17th August. Whilst there was any chance of the army winning through the argument was different. But late events have quite altered the balance of the scales. A naval attack on our objective is the only way now to avoid a winter campaign. . . . The presence of but a small number of ships on the other side of the Narrows would so alter the situation in our favour that it would surely be worth the loss of an equal number of ships."

¹ The 87th Brigade, commanded by Major (temporary Br.-General) C. H. T. Lucas *vice* Br.-General W. R. Marshall, now commanding the division.

² In a further operation next day, however, the 8/Northumberland Fusiliers came to serious grief in an attempt to make more ground on the right. Nearly all its officers were casualties and over 350 men, and the battalion had to be temporarily replaced in the 34th Brigade by the 6/East Yorkshire (Pioneers).

the Suvla beaches and the open country beyond them were in full view of the Turks at effective artillery range, and that there were no covered approaches to the corps front line. For this reason Sir Ian Hamilton was in favour of a night advance. But he allowed himself to be overruled by the local commanders, who urged that their troops were not highly trained enough for concerted action in the dark.

It is noteworthy that at this juncture, while General de Lisle's confidence was beginning to increase, the Commander-in-Chief was becoming more and more impressed by the difficulties of the task confronting him. From every point of view, the capture of the W Hills was imperatively necessary; but there could no longer be any doubt that these positions were now very formidable, and that General de Lisle's force was all too weak to make their capture a certainty. He decided, therefore, on the evening of the 18th to reinforce de Lisle with the two remaining brigades of the 29th Division.

General de Lisle was so heartened by the promise of this extra assistance that the next morning found him engaged on a more ambitious scheme for the impending battle. In place of a strictly limited attack on the W Hills, he now drew up a plan which practically amounted to a general advance on the whole front of his corps. This revised scheme was sent to G.H.Q. for approval, but the Commander-in-Chief was opposed to it. His one object in sending the 29th Division to Suvla had been to make a certainty of capturing the W Hills. He was determined not to risk failure by attempting too much. Early on the 20th General Braithwaite was sent over to Suvla to warn the corps commander that an operation along the Kiretch Tepe ridge "seemed rather a dubious enterprise", and that, "unless the enemy was definitely routed", no attempt should be made to push further forward than the line of the W Hills.

In point of fact this insistence on limiting the scope of the attack was due to far graver considerations than Sir Ian Hamilton could then admit even to his corps commander. During the past few days Sir Ian had been taking a much more serious view of the situation in the northern zone than when General de Lisle was first sent to Suvla. He still hoped for ultimate victory. But he entertained that hope with ever-decreasing conviction. The absence of any reply to his appeal for reinforcements was adding to his anxieties,¹ and at this

¹ Later in the day a telegram arrived from the Prime Minister that Lord Kitchener was in France and that no answer could be sent till he returned.

20 Aug. very moment he was weighing the possibility that at no distant date he might be forced to shorten his line by the drastic step of abandoning Suvla Bay.

The problem confronting the Expeditionary Force at this time was less a matter of strategy than of elementary arithmetic. Previous experience had shown that it was not safe to count on holding a line defensively for any length of time with a force of less than four men per yard, allowing for normal reliefs. But the British force at Anzac and Suvla was now holding a frontage of roughly 20,000 yards with only 50,000 rifles. Moreover, there was no possibility of further help arriving for at least another month, and during that period the British strength would be steadily dwindling with battle casualties and disease. The Turks, on the other hand, were believed to have 75,000 rifles in the northern zone, and their numbers were steadily increasing. It was possible, therefore, that even if the War Council should agree to send out all the reinforcements asked for, a moment might soon be reached when it would be imperative for the British force, if only as a temporary measure, to shorten the length of its line.

The approaching fight for the W Hills had originally been regarded as a preliminary step towards the capture of the Anafarta spur and the Tekke Tepe ridge. It was now plain, however, that unless and until large reinforcements arrived it would be next to impossible to capture the Tekke Tepe ridge, and quite impossible to hold it, even if captured, unless by some unexpected chance the Turkish defence should crumble.

On the other hand, it seemed fairly certain that the W Hills could be captured with the help of the 29th Division, and that the possession of these hills—and possibly Scimitar Hill immediately to the north of them—would be of very great value. Not only would they help to protect the Suvla beaches and back areas from enemy shell fire, but in the event of it proving necessary to shorten the British line in the northern zone, the least difficult course would be to abandon the Suvla plain and Suvla Bay; and the possession of these hills would simplify that problem. The line W Hills—Chocolate Hill—Lala Baba would offer a satisfactory northern flank for defensive purposes, and would reduce the length of the British front by several thousand yards. Similarly the possession of Hill 60 on the Anzac front, which General Birdwood meant to capture in co-operation with de Lisle's advance, would strengthen the British line astride the Azmak valley. Up to the present the inner flanks of the Anzac corps and IX Corps had not been joined securely, and the flats of the Azmak valley were only held by a



Imperial War Museum Photo.

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THE SALT LAKE FROM THE MOUTH OF KALAJIK-DERE

Showing the Azmak valley, Lala Baba, the Kiretch Tepe ridge and, on the extreme right, Chocolate Hill

weak chain of sentry groups. These sentry groups were in 20 Aug. places not more than a mile from the sea-coast, and a journey along the shore from Anzac to Suvla was very far from safe even at night. But with Hill 60 in British hands it would be possible to entrench a strong line stretching due north from that neighbourhood to the W Hills, and lateral communication along a coastal road from Anzac to Iala Baba would become comparatively secure.

These, therefore, were the main reasons which prompted Sir Ian Hamilton not to embark at this juncture upon an attack along Kiretch Tepe, and to veto a more advanced objective on the right than the line of the W Hills.

Following General Braithwaite's visit to Suvla, it was decided that the IX Corps objective in the coming action should be a north and south line astride the southern end of the Anafarta spur, including Scimitar Hill. General Birdwood's left flank was to co-operate with one brigade by capturing Hill 60 and a position northward from that point, *via* Susak Kuyu, to connect with the new right flank of the IX Corps.

General de Lisle's orders for the battle of 21st August were issued at 3 P.M. on the 20th August. The 11th Division was to capture the W Hills, and the 29th Division 112 Metre Hill and Scimitar Hill. If these points were reached "one strong "brigade" of the corps reserve (10th Division) was to push through to establish a still more advanced line astride the Anafarta spur from 101 Metre Hill to the neighbourhood of Abrikja. No special task was allotted to the 53rd and 54th Divisions in the centre and left of the IX Corps line, but they were "to take advantage of any opportunity to gain ground" Sketch 29.

The infantry attack, which was to be preceded by half an hour's bombardment,¹ was to begin at 3 P.M. and to consist of two phases. In the first phase four battalions of the 11th Division were to capture a narrow line of trench which ran north from Azmak Dere to Hetman Chair, and a communication trench running east from that locality to the main Turkish position on the W Hills. In the second phase, to start at half past three, the remainder of the 11th Division would capture the W Hills, and the 29th Division would advance simultaneously to 112 Metre Hill and Scimitar Hill. At the same moment, while the attention of the enemy was engaged by these attacks,

¹ The bombardment was limited to half an hour partly owing to shortage of ammunition and partly to the necessity of reaching 112 Metre Hill before the arrival of a Turkish reserve division believed to be at Biyuk Anafarta. Actually the nearest Turkish reserves were 3 battalions at Turshun Keui and 6 battalions (the Turkish 6th Division) at Selvili.

20 Aug. the brigade of the corps reserve selected for the final advance¹ was to move forward across the open from Lala Baba to Chocolate Hill.

Sketch All the units in the New Zealand and Australian Division
30. were so weak after the heavy fighting earlier in the month that, in order to collect a force of the approximate strength of an infantry brigade to attack Hill 60, detachments had to be drawn from no less than four different brigades. This composite force of 3,000 rifles comprised men of British, Australian, New Zealand and Gurkha units, and was placed under the command of Major-General Cox. Its attack was to begin at 3 P.M. after a preliminary bombardment lasting three quarters of an hour. Here it must be noticed that the main objective of this attack—Hill 60—though of great tactical importance in 1915, is scarcely recognizable as a hill in time of peace. Situated at the extreme end of the spur which forms the eastern boundary of Kaiajik Dere, it is in reality a small mound, of which the rounded top, in August 1915, was thickly clothed with scrub about three feet high. The artillery available to support the IX Corps attack amounted to 32 field guns, seven 60-pdrs., twelve 5-inch and 4.5-inch howitzers and four 10-pdrs., while the Anzac left flank artillery consisted of 30 guns and howitzers—a total of 85 pieces. In addition, naval artillery assistance was to be provided by the battleship *Swiftsure* in Suvla Bay, three cruisers and two destroyers. The artillery available for the battle was therefore considerably stronger than on any previous date since the beginning of the August battles. But it was all too weak for the heavy task assigned to it. The stock of ammunition was sinking very low, and there was little more in sight.

The 29th Division, all of which, with the exception of the 87th Brigade, had to come from Helles, could be given little time to prepare for the coming battle. The divisional commander reached Suvla on the afternoon of the 19th, and three battalions of the 86th Brigade arrived there on the following morning. But the other five battalions were in front line at Helles when the order arrived for their immediate transfer to Suvla. Four of them were consequently unable to embark till the night of the 20th/21st, and one battalion—the 2/Hampshire—did not arrive at Suvla till after the battle began.

During the afternoon of the 20th the 86th and 87th Brigades received warning orders for the next day's attack: they were to move forward that night and take over the left section of the 11th Division line, from Sulajik to Green Hill.

¹ General Peyton, commanding the corps reserve, chose the 2nd Mounted Division for this task.

Major-General Marshall's orders to the 29th Division were 21 Aug. issued at 1 A.M. on the 21st. The 86th Brigade was to capture 112 Metre Hill, the 87th Brigade Scimitar Hill. As soon as these positions were strongly held, both brigades were to turn inwards and attack the intervening trenches. The 88th Brigade, which had not yet arrived from Helles, would be held in divisional reserve.¹

On the front of the 11th Division, after the relief of the 33rd Brigade, Major-General Hammersley had the 32nd Brigade on the left, next to the 86th Brigade, the 34th Brigade on the right, and the 33rd Brigade in reserve at Lala Baba.²

The rounded hill of Lala Baba, and the low sea cliffs below it, were the only points near the battlefield where any cover from view could be obtained for troops in reserve. Here, therefore, the 2nd Mounted Division and the 30th Brigade were also sent on the night of the 20th, these units marching round the bay after dusk from their bivouacs on the northern side. For lack of room the third brigade of the corps reserve (the 31st Brigade) was retained on the northern side of the bay till early on the 21st, when it moved in small parties to Hill 10.

All these moves were carried out without interference by the enemy, and apart from a wild outburst of firing near Scimitar Hill about 2 A.M., the night of the 20th/21st August was unusually quiet.

Though the Turks were believed to have 75,000 men in the northern half of the peninsula, the greater part of this force was thought to be either on or in rear of Sari Bair, or in reserve further to the north. On the actual front to be attacked available information on the morning of the 21st August went to show that from Azmak Dere northwards to Sulajik the Turkish line was occupied by not more than six battalions, with perhaps one division in reserve near the Anafarta gap. The *Gallipoli Gendarmerie* on Kiretch Tepe was known to have been reinforced, but the total strength of the Turks on that flank was not thought to exceed 3,000 men.

In point of fact these figures greatly underestimated the Turkish strength in the immediate neighbourhood. The Bulair isthmus had now been stripped of its garrison, and Mustafa

¹ Three battalions of this brigade disembarked during the morning and were sent in small parties to concentrate behind Chocolate Hill.

² General Hammersley's orders were issued at midnight on the 20th/21st. Unfortunately the orders for the 32nd Brigade miscarried, and the copy did not reach brigade headquarters till 10 A.M. Consequently the orders for battalions were so late in arriving that they had no time to filter down to N.C.O's. before zero hour. Some of the battalions, therefore, started the attack with their task known only to the officers, and when heavy casualties occurred amongst the latter great confusion was unavoidable.

21 Aug. Kemal, in command of the Anafarta Group, had under his command no less than five divisions. Two of these divisions, the 7th and 12th, still had their point of junction astride Azmak Dere, so that the 7th Division would bear the shock of General Cox's advance, while the 12th, with the *Broussa Gendarmerie* and other units originally under Major Willmer's command on this flank, stretched northwards from Azmak Dere to the neighbourhood of Baka Baba.

For the defence of the Kiretch Tepe ridge three battalions of the 9th Division were at or near Ejelmer Bay as an immediate support to Willmer's 5th Division.

Six battalions of the 9th Division were at Turshun Keui, and the 6th Division¹ (six battalions in all) was at Selvili, about 4½ miles east of the Anafarta gap. These twelve battalions were equally well placed either to reinforce the Kiretch Tepe ridge or the Anafarta spur.

The artillery at Mustafa Kemal's disposal consisted of 25 field and mountain guns and two 12-cm. howitzers on Kiretch Tepe, 30 guns and two 12-cm. howitzers supporting the 12th Division, and 25 guns opposite the Anzac left flank—a total of 84 pieces in all. These guns overlooked the British lines like the audience at a theatre overlook the stage.

It is plain, therefore, that on the morning of the 21st August General de Lisle was faced with a problem of very real difficulty.

¹ The 6th Division had formed the last remaining garrison of the Saros Gulf and the Bulair isthmus. With its departure this vital point had been completely denuded of troops. But the Turkish High Command, recognizing that the critical nature of the fighting at Anzac and Suvla required Liman's undivided attention, and that Russia's defeats in Galicia had removed the last remaining fear of an attack on the Bosphorus, had now decided that Field-Marshal von der Goltz, commanding the *First Army* at Constantinople, should be made responsible for the defence of the Bulair area, with headquarters at Gallipoli town; and a part of the *First Army* was about to arrive at Bulair.

